procurement of wheat in the current Rabi Marketing Season 1997-98 is progressing smoothly. A total quantity of 47.88 lakh tonnes of wheat has been procured upto 13.5.97 as against 71.85 lakh tonnes procured during the corresponding period of last season. The ban of export of wheat and wheat products and stock holding limits will also continue in 1997-98. Government have also decided to import an additional quantity of two million tonnes of wheat during 1997-98. All these measures are expected to result in adequate level of procurement for the Central pool to meet full requirement of the Targeted PDS and also the buffer stocking norms.

Rampant sale of wheat to Businessmen in West Bengal

4510. SHRI MD. SALIM: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of Government has been drawn to a press report which appeared in The Statesman, dated 29th December, 1996, that the officers of FCI in West Bengal had been indulging in rampant sale of wheat to businessmen and thus created non-availability of wheat and atta in PDS shops in West Bengal; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) The allocation and offtake of wheat under PDS for the State of West Bengal from October, 1996 to December, 1996 was as follows:

(IN THOUSAND TONNES)

MONTH	ALLOT-MENT	OFF TAKE
October, 1996	90	78.60
November, 1996	90	80.80
December, 1996	90	75.40

On the other hand, a quantity of only 24.92 thousand MTs and 29.30 thousand MTs, during October and November, 1996 respectively, was sold in West Bengal under Open Market Sales Schemes OMSS (D). No quantity of wheat was sold in West Bengal in the month of December, 1996 under the said Scheme. The report appearing in the press does not seem to be based on facts.

Hike in Prices of wheat, Rice and Sugar for Sale through PDS

4511. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that prices of wheat, rice and sugar meant for sale through PDS have been hiked 3 to 4 times by Government during 1996-97;

(b) if so, the details thereof item-wise/price-wise during 1995-96 and 1996-97;

(c) whether this will not affect the people who are living below the poverty line and depend more or less on foodgrains being supplied/sold through PDS; and

(d) if so, the remedial measures Government have taken so far or propose to take to mitigate the hardship being caused to the poor people?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA): (a) and (b) The Central Issue Prices of wheat and rice for PDS raised w.e.f. 1.2.1994 are still in force. Consequent upon the decision of the Central Government to streamline and restructure PDS with its focus on the poor (the Targetted PDS), the CIP (Ex-FCI godown) of wheat and rice issued from the central Pool will stand revised from 1st June, 1997, as under:—

(Rs. per qtl.)

Under Targeted PDS (effective from 1.6.1997)

	CIP FOR PDS effective from 1.2.94)	CIP for families Below Poverty Line (BPL)	CIP for families Above Poverty Line (APL)
Wheat	402	250	450
Rice—	537	350	—
Common—Fine	617	350	650
Super-fine	648	—	750

In case, however, a State/UT is ready to implement the Targeted PDS from a date earlier than 1.6.1997, the revised prices for both BPL and APL population will apply from such a date.

As regards sugar, the retail issue price has been raised from Rs.9.05 fixed w.e.f. 1.2.94 to Rs.10.50 per kg. w.e.f. 10.2.1997.

(c) and (d) The revised prices under TPDS show a substantial price reduction for the population below poverty line who are entitled to supply of 10 kg. of foodgrains per family, per month at specially subsidised prices. Besides this, the Government have taken number of steps including import of wheat, to control the rise in open market prices of foodgrains and to increase availability in the country.

भारतीय खाद्य निगम के गोदामों में गेहूं तथा चावल का भंडार

4512. **श्री गोपाल सिंह जी० सोलंकी:** क्या **खाद्य** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

जून, 1996 के अंत में भारतीय खाद्य निगम के गोदामों में कितनी मात्रा में गेहूं तथा चावल उपलब्ध था;

(ख) 31 अक्तूबर, 1996 तक भारतीय खाद्य निगम द्वारा निर्यात किए गए गेहूं तथा चावल की पृथक-पृथक मात्रा कितनी है?

(ग) क्या गेहूं तथा चावल का निर्यात करने से भारतीय खाद्य निगम की वित्तीय आवश्यकताएं पूरी हो जाएंगी; और

(घ) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है?

कृषि मंत्री, खाद्य मंत्री तथा नागरिक आपूर्ति उपभोक्ता मामले और सार्वजनिक वितरण मंत्री (श्री चतुरानन मिश्र): (क) पहली जुलाई, 1996 को स्थिति के अनुसार भारतीय खाद्य निगम के गोदामों में 55.94 लाख टन गेहूं और 108.50 लाख टन चावल उपलब्ध था।

(ख) भारतीय खाद्य निगम ने गेंहूं और चावल का सीधे निर्यात नहीं किया है। तथापि, भारतीय खाद्य निगम ने खुली बिक्री योजना के अधीन निर्यात के प्रयोजन के लिए विभिन्न निर्यातकों को गेहूं और चावल की निम्नलिखित मात्राएं रिलीज की थीं:—

(आंकड़े लाख टन में)

वर्ष	भारतीय खाद्य निगम द्वारा रिलीज की गई मात्रा		
	गेहूं	चावल	जोड़
1995-96	0.81	14.90	15.71